

MANUAL *of*
First Baptist Church

Addison, Vermont

1909

Containing

Covenant

Articles *of* Faith

Rules *of* Order

Historical Sketch

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Incorporated November, 1909

HISTORICAL SKETCH

This church was organized Oct. 25, 1797, at the house of Noah Wilson by a council of delegates from the Baptist churches of Cornwall, Shoreham, Panton and Pleasant Valley. At its organization the church consisted of twelve members, four of whom were men and eight women. Immediately after they were organized as a church they received Gideon Seeger by letter and elected him church clerk.

For a time the church was supplied regularly by Rev. Phelps, Henry Chamberlain, Ephraim Sawyer and others, the meetings being held in private houses. Rev. Samuel Rogers settled with the church, Oct. 20, 1802, and was the first permanent pastor remaining until 1805 when he was succeeded by Elder John Rogers who served two years. During these two pastorates there were few baptisms though very many additions by letter.

In 1807 Rev. John Haywood accepted pastoral charge of the church which he held for one year. During that time over thirty united with the church by baptism.

He was followed by Nathaniel Kendrick who remained one year, but under whose pastoral charge there was a steady gain. Rev. Elisha Starkweather remained with the church nearly one year, and Rev. Chamberlain one year and a half.

Rev. Abel Woods settled with the church August, 1816, and received a salary of fifty dollars a year. He remained with the church three years and in that time ninety-three were received by baptism.

In 1819 Rev. Carter served the church for one year as pastor.

July, 1820, Rev. Seth Ewers was called to the pastorate of the church and labored faithfully for three years. He was remembered as one of the best pastors the church ever had.

Rev. Aristarchus Wiley followed him remaining for two years. Rev. L. Austin served the church for a short time, and was succeeded by Rev. Covell.

Rev. Hurlburt preached here for a short time and was succeeded by Rev. Storrs who remained for two years.

In 1832 Rev. Burton Carpenter accepted the pastoral charge of this church and served faithfully for six years. His ministrations were signally blessed. Eighty-nine were baptized and the membership reached the highest point in its history, one hundred and eighty-seven.

Rev. Bryant succeeded him and remained but a short

time, and was followed by the Rev. Israel Keach who served the church from 1841 to 1845.

Rev. Willis settled with the church in 1845 and died in 1848. The church was then supplied for a short time by Rev. Low who was succeeded in 1848 by Rev. M. D. Miller who remained until 1853. Rev. Himes served the church for three years. Rev. Ware for two years. Rev. Goodspeed with nine years. Rev. Crafts three years. Rev. Wheelock one year. Rev. Mott three years and a half. Rev. Bullard with two years. T. H. Archbald, D. D., three years. Rev. Ogden three years. Rev. Freeman with one year. Rev. Pearson with three years.

Rev. Guy C. Lamson to whom we owe a large part of this history and who was greatly beloved by all, under his labors the church increased in membership from thirty-eight to seventy-one. He was followed by Rev. White. The church had increased but little in strength at the close of this pastorate of three years, numbering seventy-six. Rev. Charles Parker, a very consecrated pastor, labored with the church for eleven months, and was followed by Rev. Powell who did good work. After a short period without a pastor, Rev. H. H. White who was attending the medical college at Burlington was again called to serve the church, and began his work in Nov., 1903.

The church membership numbered 48 at this time but has steadily increased until now there are 96 names upon the roll. Forty of these united with the

church by baptism and several others by letter and experience.

The first steps toward building a meeting house were taken in 1811 but the building was not completed until 1816. It received a thorough repairing in 1849 and was newly carpeted in 1886, papered and painted and a new vestry put in in 1894.

In 1907 the meeting house was again repaired, the exterior receiving a fresh coat of paint, the foundation repaired, and new timbers put in the steeple to replace those that had decayed. The interior was painted and papered and a beautiful steel ceiling put in.

A good furnace was installed and through the kindness of Col. Illsley of Middlebury the church was able to erect a new chimney and cement steps.

The church now has a fine property and is in excellent repair.

Formerly there were several societies connected with the church and owning most of the property; but these societies have deeded all the property owned by and controlled by them to the First Baptist church as incorporated.

The church has been greatly favored in her selection of deacons. The names of these faithful men are given below:

Deacon John Ward,
Deacon ——— White,
Deacon Rufus Smith
Deacon Justus Jackson,

Deacon Heman Allen,
Deacon Gardner Whitford,
Deacon Austin Fisher,
Deacon Joseph Barber,
Deacon Rufus Smith,
Deacon Ezra Smith,
Deacon Asa Wilmarth,
Deacon S. Ezra Smith,
Deacon Ezra Whitford,
Deacon A. S. Crane.

The membership of the church is composed largely of young people which speaks well for the future.

The church has always been self-supporting and has given as opportunity came to them to help others. There is a spirit of prayer and determination to press on which is encouraging.

ARTICLES OF ASSOCIATION of the First Baptist Church in Addison

We, the subscribers, hereby associate ourselves together as a corporation, under the laws of the State of Vermont, to be known by the name of the First Baptist Church of Addison, Vermont, for the purpose

of supporting the gospel, maintaining public worship, and conducting those social duties usually pertaining to religious societies. Also for the purpose of procuring, holding and keeping in repair parsonage and other buildings, the use and avails of which shall be appropriated to the support of public worship at Addison in the County of Addison and State of Vermont.

Said corporation to be located and its meetings held at Addison in the County of Addison and State of Vermont, upon the following conditions, that said corporation when organized shall adopt by-laws for the election of officers and the conduct of its business affairs not inconsistent with the laws of this State. The first meeting of said corporation to be called in November next by the pastor of said church.

Dated at Addison, in the County of Addison, this 28th day of October, A. D. 1909.

DECLARATION OF FAITH

I

We believe that the Bible is the revealed will of God, written by men divinely inspired, and that it is the only sufficient and perfect rule of faith and practice. 2 Tim. 3:16; Luke 24:44.

II

We believe there is only one God self existent, infinite in every moral excellence and has revealed Himself as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Gen. 45:21, 22; Ex. 3:14; John 1:1-13.

III

We believe that man was created holy but by wilfully transgressing the law of his maker, he fell from that estate; hence by nature there is no holiness, but we are all inclined to evil and in that, "all have sinned, all are children of wrath justly exposed to death and other miseries, temporal, spiritual, eternal. Gen. 1:27, 31; Gen. 2:16, 17; Eccl. 7:29; Rom. 5:12; 1 John 1:8.

IV

We believe that the only way of deliverance from this state of guilt and condemnation is through Jesus Christ, the eternal word, who miraculously assumed our nature. John 1:14; Luke 1:26-35; John 3:16; Rom. 3:20-26; Acts 4:12.

V

We believe that all who truly obey the Gospel were chosen in Christ "Before the foundation of the world by Him who sees the end from the beginning," and in consequence not of their own merit but of God's own purpose and grace, they are regenerated by the Holy Spirit without whose influence none could repent and

believe. Eph. 1:4; Is. 46:10; John 3:6-8; 1 Peter 1:2; James 1:18; Eph. 2:10.

VI

We believe that the blessings of salvation are free to all by the Gospel, that it is the great privilege of all to accept them by a cordial and obedient faith. Nothing prevents the salvation of the greatest sinner upon earth but his own voluntary refusal to submit to the Lord Christ.

VII

We believe that a special providence watches over the true believer and that they will be kept by the grace of God through faith unto salvation. 1 Peter 1:5; Col. 1:21-23.

VIII

We believe that the ordinances are baptism and the Lord's Supper. Matt. 3:6-12; 28:19-20; 26:26-30; 1 Cor. 11:23-26; Acts 8: 12-37; Rom. 6:1-13.

IX

We believe that the first day of the week is the Christian Sabbath and is to be devoted to religious uses. John 20:19, 26; 1 Cor. 16:1, 2.

X

We believe that there will be a resurrection of the dead and a final judgment. Acts 24:15; 17:30, 31; Matt. 25:31-46.

CHURCH COVENANT

Having been led, as we believe, by the Spirit of God to receive the Lord Jesus Christ as our Savior, and upon the profession of our faith, having been baptized unto the name of Father, Son and Holy Spirit, we do now in the presence of God, angels, and this assembly most solemnly and joyfully enter into covenant with one another as one body in Christ.

We promise, therefore, by the aid of the Holy Spirit, to forsake the paths of sin and to walk in the ways of holiness all the days of our lives.

With this view we engage to strive together for the advancement of this church in knowledge, holiness and comfort to promote its prosperity and spirituality, to sustain its worship, ordinances, discipline and doctrine; to contribute cheerfully and regularly to the support of the ministry, the expenses of the church, the relief of the poor, and the spread of the Gospel through all nations.

We also engage to maintain family and secret devotion, to religiously educate our children, to seek the salvation of our kindred and our acquaintances, to walk circumspectly in the world, to be just in our dealings, faithful in our engagements, and exemplary in our deportment, to avoid all tattling, back-biting, and excessive anger, to abstain from the sale and use of

intoxicating drink as a beverage, and to be zealous in our efforts to advance the Kingdom of our Savior.

We further engage to walk together in christian love and watchfulness, giving and receiving admonition with meekness, and remembering each other in prayer, to aid each other in sickness and distress, to cultivate Christian sympathy in feeling, and courtesy in speech, to be slow to take offence, but always ready for reconciliation, and mindful of the rules of our Savior, to secure it without delay.

When we remove from this place we will as soon as possible unite with some other church where we can carry out the spirit of this covenant and the principles of God's Word.

RULES OF ORDER

MEMBERSHIP

SECTION 1

Art. 1 Any person professing faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and giving evidence of a change of heart may be received by baptism into membership of this church.

Art. 2 Candidates bringing letters of recommendation or dismission from other churches of the same faith and order may be received upon such letters.

Art. 3 Persons not members of any Baptist church but who have been baptized may be received upon their christian experience.

Art. 4 Persons who have been disfellowshipped may be restored upon confession of their errors and giving satisfactory evidence of repentance.

Art. 5 Members of this church who are removing from us are recommended to apply for letters of dismission and recommendation to some church where they are going to reside.

Art. 6 Any person moving from this place and not taking a letter of recommendation unless they report themselves by letter or otherwise, before one year's absence, the clerk shall report him or her to the church and they shall be dropped from the list of members.

Art. 7 Resident members who shall neglect attendance upon the appointments and ordinances of the church for more than one year without sending satisfactory reasons shall be dropped from the list of members.

Art. 8 All members of this church shall be members of this body incorporated under the laws of the State of Vermont.

SECTION II

Art. 1 The presiding officer of this church shall be the pastor and in his absence the senior deacon present.

Art. 2 The annual meeting shall be held on the sec-

ond Friday in January and the following officers elected by ballot: a clerk, treasurer, four deacons, one to be elected at each annual meeting for a term of four years, three trustees whose term of office shall be for three years, one to be elected at each annual meeting; a church committee of seven members for a term of one year, a superintendent of the Sunday School, librarian, secretary and treasurer.

SECTION III

Art. 1 It shall be the duty of the pastor to preach statedly at the church, administer the ordinances of the Gospel and to act as moderator when present at meetings for the transaction of business.

Art. 2 The clerk shall keep a record of the membership and meetings of the church and perform the usual duties of such office.

Art. 3 The treasurer shall receive and keep account of all moneys paid into the church, and pay out the same under the direction of the church committee, taking a receipt for such payment.

Art. 4 It shall be the duty of the trustees to have charge of all the property of the church, whether it be meeting house, parsonage, or any other property, belonging to, or used by the church, receiving all rentals and paying the same into the hands of the church treasurer, superintending all repairs, raising money for the same and drawing orders upon the treasurer of the church, for expenses so incurred.

Art. 5 The church committee shall have charge of all the current business affairs of the church, engaging sexton, purchasing supplies and representing the church in all business transactions not involving the transfer of real estate, or improvements, or repairs, shall devise means for raising the finances of the church and shall direct the payment of the same. Before each annual meeting this committee shall audit the treasurer's account and make report at said meeting. This committee shall act as a pulpit supply committee.

Art. 6 The Sunday School Superintendent shall have charge of the Sunday School Department of the church and shall preside at all its services, when present, and appoint teachers, arrange classes, and supervise the work of this department, shall prepare an annual report and submit the same to the school on the Sunday preceeding the annual meeting of the church. Such report as then amended and adopted shall be submitted to the church at its annual business meeting.

Art. 7 The Assistant Superintendent shall aid and co-operate with the Superintendent and discharge the duties of the Superintendent when such officer is not prseent.

Art. 8 The librarian shall have charge of all the books and maps belonging to the Sunday School.

Art. 9 It shall be the duty of the secretary of the Sunday School department to keep a record of all rules,

resolutions and attendance, reporting the attendance at each session before the session closes.

Art. 10 Special meetings may be called by the pastor or clerk, notice being given from the desk the Sunday preceding.

Art. 11 Five members shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business.

Art. 12 Covenant and business meetings of the church shall be held the Thursday evening preceding the first Sunday of every month. At this meeting a report of the treasurer shall be heard for the month preceding and other items of business attended to.

SECTION IV

Art. 1 This constitution and by-laws and views of doctrine may be changed by a two-thirds vote of the members present, a written notice of the proposed change having been read from the desk, and posted on the bulletin board of the church at least ten days before such meeting.

Above views of doctrine, covenant and rules of order and constitution adopted by the First Baptist Church (inc.) the 2nd Thursday in Jan., 1910.